

Unit 1/Lesson 1 Week One

Lesson Title: Classroom Constitution

Short Term Goal: Create a "working" Classroom Constitution that governs the classroom and supports school rules, policies, and procedures.

SLE's:

C.4.3.1: Discuss why government is necessary at the local level

C.4.3.2: Describe responsibilities and services of local government

C.5.3.2: Describe how citizens contribute to the improvement of a community (e.g., service projects, volunteerism)

Common Core Standards:

CC3RL1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CC3RL4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from no literal language.

CC3RI1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers

CC3RI2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details & explain how they support the main idea.

CC3SL1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CC3SL1b Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

CC3SL1c Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic & link their comments to the remarks of others.

CC3SL4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts & relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

CC3SL4a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.

CC3SL6 Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task & situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

CC.3.W.4. With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Materials:

1. Chart
2. Learning logs
3. Markers for recording student responses
4. Copy of the U.S. Constitution
5. Lined paper for each student to copy the Classroom Constitution
6. Student pencils
7. *Shh, We're Writing the Constitution*, Jean Fritz (Can be found on United Streaming)
8. Schoolhouse Rock Preamble [http:// www.schoolhouserock.tv](http://www.schoolhouserock.tv)
9. Constitution <http://www.constitution.org/constit .htm>

Direct Explanation/Model:

Four Sessions/Whole and Small Group

What:

The students will participate in a variety of activities to learn about the need for as well as the contents of the US Constitution before creating a "working" Classroom Constitution that governs the classroom and supports school rules, policies, and procedures.

Why:

We all need to understand the need for rules in a family, community, and school in order to maintain safety and fairness.

How:

The students will play a game that seems to be unfair because it has no rules. They will listen to a story about the framers of the US Constitution and learn the Preamble. Then they will create a "working" Classroom Constitution that governs the classroom and supports school rules, policies, and procedures. They will develop a maximum of six positively stated rules or Classroom Standards and help edit and revise the final draft before accepting and signing their own Classroom Constitution.

Session One**Guided Practice:**

Divide class into two teams. Give one team a simple math problem (grade level appropriate). When they answer it correctly, give them 30 points. Give the next team a math problem and 100 points when they answer it correctly. The object of the game is to score the team differently and unfairly. Students should quickly understand that the game is unfair. At the end of the game, allow students to discuss their reactions and feelings.

Discuss the importance of rules. Ask the students the following questions:

- When do we use rules?
- Why do we need rules — at home, at school, in our community, in our country?
- What would happen if we did not follow the rules — at home, at school, in our community, in our country?
- Who enforces rules — at home, at school, in our community, in our country?

Step 3: Show a copy of the US Constitution. Guide the discussion to understanding its purpose. Summarize the "rules" listed in the Bill of Rights.

Apply:

In “My thoughts” section of learning logs the students will write a sentence or two describing what it would be like if your favorite game such as “kick ball” was played without rules.

Session Two

Guided Practice:

Review the importance of having rules and of the Constitution. Introduce the book *Shh! We're Writing the Constitution*, by Jean Fritz and share that it will help them understand how and why the U.S. Constitution was written. Write the following heading on the board or on chart paper: "What kinds of rules do we need in our classroom to maintain order and fairness?" Review, if needed, the meaning of the words **order** and **fairness**. Refer to the brief math game that was played the previous day. Ask them to think about this question while you are reading the book to them.

After the read aloud, brainstorm with the class what their thoughts were about rules they need in their classroom this school year to maintain order and fairness. Write their responses underneath the heading on the board or chart paper. Then place students in groups of 2-4. Instruct them to choose 3 rules from the list they brainstormed and generate 3 Classroom Standards. Each standard should be stated in the **positive**. For example, if one of their rules was "Don't yell in the classroom," then a positively stated Classroom Standard would be: "We use our inside voices in the classroom."

Upon completion, have each group share their positively stated Standards with the class. Record Standards on chart paper. Instruct the students to identify duplicates and help revise the list to total of **six** standards. At a later time, rewrite the revised Standards onto another sheet of chart paper. Display all chart paper used in the process to help students visualize the concept of editing.

Session Three:

Review the process of brainstorming, editing, and revising the Classroom Standards. Discuss the following questions with the class:

- Will the posted Standards help us work together?
- Will the Standards help each student do his/her best work?
- Are the Standards stated in the positive?
- Are the standards realistic?

Remind the students that a Classroom Standard is stated positively for all to follow. Referring to the process of the Constitutional Convention written in Jean Fritz' book, ask the students to decide as class on whether these should be their Classroom Standards for the school year by voting "yea" or "nay."

Have the students sign the constitution. Take a photograph of the class to be displayed with the document.

Assessment:

- Did the students respect the dignity of all team members?
- Were **all** students actively engaged in the lesson?